

REMARKS

Claims 16-19, 21, 22, 29, 31-33, 35, 40-42, 44, 46, 51, 53, and 54 are pending, with claims 16, 29, 42 and 46 being independent. Claims 16, 19, 21, 29, 32, 35, 42, and 46 have been amended, and claims 1, 6, 7, 8, 11-15, 20, 23, 28, 30, 34, 36, 39, 43, 45, 47, 50, and 55 have been canceled.

Initially, Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 28, 39, 40, 43, 50, 54, and 55 contain allowable subject matter. Support for the amendments to independent claim 16 can be found in canceled claims 28 and 55. Support for the amendments to independent claim 29 can be found in canceled claim 39. Support for the amendments to independent claim 42 can be found in canceled claim 43. Support for the amendments to independent claim 46 can be found in canceled claim 50. No new matter has been added.

The rejections of (1) claims 1, 16, 18, 20, 46, and 53 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0137239 ("Koyanagi") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,245,616 ("Buchanan"), (2) claims 8, 11, 12, 17, 19, and 47 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Koyanagi in view of Buchanan and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,497,783 ("Suzuki"), (3) claims 13-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Koyanagi, Buchanan, and Suzuki and further in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0036752 ("Deboer"), (4) claims 21-23 and 51 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Koyanagi in view of Buchanan and further in view of Deboer, (5) claims 29 and 42 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Koyanagi in view of Buchanan and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,436,777 ("Ota"), (6) claims 30 and 31 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Koyanagi, Buchanan, and Ota and further in view of Suzuki, (7) claims 32-36 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Koyanagi, Buchanan, and Ota and further in view of Deboer, and (8) claims 41 and 44 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Koyanagi, Buchanan, and Ota and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,228,779 ("Bloom"), are respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 16 has been amended to recite a method for forming an insulating film comprising, *inter alia*, plasma nitriding a surface of a substrate before formation of a high-dielectric constant insulating film.

Independent claim 29 has been amended to recite a method for forming an insulating film comprising, *inter alia*, plasma nitriding a surface of a substrate before formation of a HfSiO film on a substrate.

None of the cited references discloses or suggest a method for forming an insulating film comprising, *inter alia*, plasma nitriding a surface of a substrate before formation of a high-dielectric constant insulating film, as recited in independent claim 16; or a method for forming an insulating film comprising, *inter alia*, plasma nitriding a surface of a substrate before formation of a HfSiO film on a substrate, as recited in independent claim 29. See pages 13-14, section 32, of the Office Action mailed August 18, 2008.

Independent claim 42 has been amended to recite a method for forming an insulating film comprising, *inter alia*, plasma nitriding a surface of a substrate before formation of a HfSiO film.

None of the cited references discloses or suggest a method for forming an insulating film comprising, *inter alia*, plasma nitriding a surface of a substrate before formation of a HfSiO film, as recited in independent claim 42. See pages 13-14, section 32, of the Office Action mailed August 18, 2008.

Independent claim 46 has been amended to recite a method for forming an electronic device comprising, *inter alia*, nitriding the surface of the high-dielectric constant gate insulating film after formation of the oxide film.

None of the cited references discloses or suggest a method for forming an electronic device comprising, *inter alia*, nitriding the surface of the high-dielectric constant gate insulating film after formation of the oxide film, as recited in independent claim 46. See pages 13-14, section 32, of the Office Action mailed August 18, 2008.

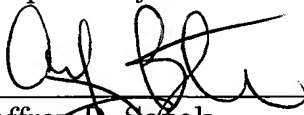
Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections of claims 16, 18, 46, and 53 over Koyanagi in view of Buchanan; claims 17 and 19 over Koyanagi in view of Buchanan and further in view of Suzuki; claims 21, 22 and 51 over Koyanagi in view of Buchanan and further in view of Deboer; claims 29 and 42 over Koyanagi in view of Buchanan and further in view of Ota; claim 31 over Koyanagi, Buchanan, and Ota and further in view of Suzuki; claims 32, 33, and 35 over Koyanagi, Buchanan, and Ota and further in view of Deboer; and claims 41 and 44 over Koyanagi, Buchanan, and Ota and further in view of Bloom, is respectfully requested.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #101249.55458US).

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